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HERALDS OF A PASSION

REV. CHARLES L. GOODELL, D.D.

HERALDS OF A PASSION

BY

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OF CHRIST IN AMERICA



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**TO
MY TRUE FRIEND
JUDGE AMOS L. BEATY**

FOREWORD

I think it fair to my reader, my book and myself to guard at the outset against any possible misapprehension as to the form and purpose of my message. Lest any one should be misled by the word "Passion" in my title and its recurrence through many chapters, I hasten to say this book is no plea for emotionalism or sentimentalism of any sort. I am not interested in turning the steam on the whistle; my concern is that there shall be fire under the boiler. Nothing in this book can be construed as an appeal to fear, or self-love, or a spineless mysticism, or against criticism, high or low. If scholars have brought virgin gold to view, if criticism has cut an old truth into finer facets, no one will welcome that more than I. Each additional discovery makes the whole Christian world richer. It is a common treasure in which men of all shades of opinion should rejoice.

You may be wiser than I, and that is well, not because it is a treasure over which you may gloat, but because it supplies you with the means to be of greater service to your kind. He who knows most must, therefore, do most, "for to whom much is given of him also will much be required." I am following after you as fast as I can. "What I know not, teach thou me," said the good St. Augustine. Wesley cries, "Do not beat me down in order to quicken my pace for then I can not follow you

at all. There is one thing greater than truth, and that is love. You may die without the knowledge of many truths, and yet be carried into Abraham's bosom, but if you die without love, what will knowledge avail? Just as much as it avails the devil and his angels."

I am led to the choice of the stirring theme which I present because it seems to me after wide travel throughout the country and intimate associations with men in the churches and out of them, that the great need of the hour is a holy passion for the souls of men. If the angel of the churches was to bring once more a greeting and challenge to the Church of the Living God, it would be a repetition of the message to the Church at Laodicea. Once it was said that "the coat-of-arms of the twentieth century is an interrogation point rampant above three bishops dormant, and its motto 'Query'." We are not passed far into the twentieth century, but we have passed beyond that attitude of mind. The church and the country are in the throes of no great theological question—the names of Darwin, of Spencer and of Huxley no longer marshal the scientists and theologians to battle. The effect of the great war has discounted the position which was taken by many German critics. Even higher criticism itself has spent much of its forces; some of its contentions have been established and others have been proven to be of too little value longer to disturb and irritate the Church. The great fundamentals of the Christian life were never more generally accepted inside the Church than they are today, but the sad thing about it all is that the world does not seem to be enough interested in Christian things even to discuss them. Not long ago the question was pro-

pounded in literary circles, "Do you find religious unrest among your friends and what is the cause of it?" The answer returned was, "We know nothing about religious unrest; we are not disturbed at all, we sleep. We do not go to church Sunday morning because we are in bed. We do not take up religious questions because we are not interested in them." So it appears that the weapon which is being used against the Church and religion today is not the sword or the stiletto, but the sand bag. The neglect of these things which we once held dear is due not to conviction but to indifference. We do not make this as a sweeping charge. There are happy exceptions throughout the country. On the whole, no year has marked as large gains in the Christian Church as the present year, but it still remains true that compared with what might be accomplished there is such a dearth of zeal and such benumbing of thought and activity as to sadden the heart of every lover of righteousness.

This attitude of stolidity and indifference was the one thing which Jesus could not stand. Next to actual hypocrisy, He fulminated against it with all the power of a flaming soul. He wanted men to think things through and to do as they ought to do. He could not brook indifference in anything. The message to the Church at Laodicea was: "Ye are neither cold nor hot. I would you were either one thing or the other. I would rather you would stand out openly against me than to be cold and indifferent. You have plenty of money and think you need nothing. You do not understand. You are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." What a challenge that

was to the first orthodox church in town, with a tall steeple and a fine choir, a big congregation and a great preacher!

I wish to bring this simple message of my Master. When He ordained Peter, He asked him no question in creed or church reform. There was only one question, so often repeated that it burned itself into Peter's soul, "Lovest thou me?" Among the dilettanti, it is supposed to be bad form to be interested in anything. The spirit of wonder has died out. Nothing any more is grand, dominant and imperative. The glory of Wordsworth's early morning has faded into the light of common day. In some way we must get back our old enthusiasm; in some way we must find once more that passion which changed the face of the ages and sent the Church with a pentecostal flame to carry the good tidings everywhere. It is to that purpose that these pages address themselves.

C. L. G.

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CHAPTER I
THE PASSION OF JESUS

HERALDS OF A PASSION

CHAPTER I

THE PASSION OF JESUS

That word "passion" has gotten into bad company if, as Dr. Crothers says, "a noun is known by the company it keeps." The word itself is a pure word. It simply means love on fire. A master of English literature has said all high poetry has its source in passion. Of course that passion may take form in love, or jealousy, or hate, or any other strong passion that transports the mind out of and above itself. It was left for Christianity to give to that word its highest meaning. The passions of the human heart were crowded into the yearning of a life and the agony of the cross. The symbol of our faith is a cross. On that cross our Master died, and our chief business is to declare a love that even the cross could not halt. Everything great in life is a passion, and religion, if alive, must be impassioned, must be threaded through and through with a network of exquisite nerves. I am the more anxious to impress this,

because we are living in an age that aims to rob religion of its "inflammatory touch." There are those who look upon all signs of emotion and devotion with distress. They seek to set forth their faith in mental crystals, they keep a cold bath for every fervor, and when their epitaph is written, sad-eyed angels will carve in the marble, "They died of too much self-control." "Light enough, but no heat," was the way someone described ancient philosophy. That is a good description of much of the theorizing of today. It is heat the world needs quite as much as light. The path to sound thinking is not always through a big brain, sometimes it is through a warm heart.

"The heart is wiser than the intellect
And works with surer hands and swifter feet
Toward wise conclusions."

A big brain and a big heart ought to go together. Neither is complete without the other.

It is a life on fire that kindles another. The fiercest enemy to be fought in our day is sheer apathy. We have been talking about religious unrest. As a matter of fact, there is too little of it—the people are asleep. What breaks the heart of the enthusiast is to fire red hot shells into a mud bank.

Have you ever meditated on the passion of our Lord? Is there a more pathetic story in literature than the rejection of Jesus? He came unto His own and His own received Him not.

He was poor and lowly. He was cast out as evil. He died upon the cross—died deserted, and men called Him mad. He was born among the cattle and He died among thieves. We marvel how the Jews could turn away from Him, but if the Lord of Glory came among us today, would we give Him any kindlier reception? He was eager; we are cold. He was enthusiastic; we are indifferent. He wept over Jerusalem; we seldom weep even for ourselves. The Church's thermometer has dropped; her step in many quarters is leaden and her spirit dull. We have lost the fine fervor of our early rapture. There are too few with blazing eye and burning heart. Some way we must win back that early enthusiasm. Do we not need the coming of that spirit that shall convict of sin and righteousness and judgment, so that our hearts shall burn and our tongues kindle? Time was when sin was an ugly thing; people were positive about moral things. There were two colors—things were very black or very white. There was a sharp line drawn between him who served God and him who served Him not. In our disposition to be tolerant, have we not lost the real sense of values? Our black and white seems to have faded into a general gray. The bad are not so bad as they might be; the good are not so good as they think they are. As George Eliot says, "Like an omnibus, we take on board anybody and anything which beckons as we pass. We en-

tertain God and the Devil on the same floor and on equal terms."

How often we read in the Scriptures that Jesus was moved with compassion. "When He saw the multitude, He was moved." Not simply touched, but swept as by a storm. He wept over Jerusalem, because He saw the people sinning, saw them missing the mark, saw the harvest of it all. Of course it would be trite and I shall be enrolled among those who ask silly and impertinent questions, but may I venture to ask if any of us ever really wept over Boston, or New York, or Chicago, or St. Louis, or any lesser city, or town where God gave us our place for service? It was a beautiful Jerusalem that Jesus looked upon; the temple like a mountain of snow, forty and six years in building; palaces for Herod and Caiaphas, a grand theater, and a great hippodrome; three historic towers on the north and east, and an acropolis,—a sight to stir the souls of men, and an unspeakable anguish to contemplate its catastrophe. Some of you have climbed the Mount of Olives and marked what yet remains of the walls the Saracen builded and the ruins of other days. Have you also climbed the hills around Boston or Pittsburgh? Have you gone to the Metropolitan or Woolworth tower and looked upon the riches of our great city, the clustered spires of cathedral and university where millions of people come and go, and have you

wept over those who go down those streets to shame and death—the flotsam and jetsam of a great city? Or have you cried as Blücher cried from the dome of St. Paul's, in London, "What a city for pillage!" And have you gone down to join the crowd in its quest after pelf to wrest something for yourself out of the general forage and plunder? I hardly dare venture to ask it, but if you were to open your desk and take out your diary, would there be in it any record of nights of anguish and of prayer for lost men such as they put down who wrote in the Gospels, the diary of the Son of God? "At the foot of the cross," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "there has been a perennial experience of relief and renovation. Ours is not a creed, it is a passion. Men in every age have died for it. In every land where its tale is told and with every new sun that dawns, drunkards may be found whom it has made sober, thieves whom it has taught to be honest, harlots whom it has lifted up to chastity, selfish men who, touched by its preaching, live by a great law of self-sacrifice. It is the root whence blossom great heroisms and charities. All human sorrows hide in His wounds. All human self-denials lean on His cross."

Well says Heine, "How great a drama is the passion of Christ. How glorious a figure is that of the Man-God. His words are a balm for all the wounds this world can inflict, and the blood

that was shed at Golgotha has become a healing stream for all that suffer. The white marble gods of the Greeks were spattered with His blood and they sickened with terror and can never more regain their health."

The simple record of three short years of Christ's life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists.

If proof is wanted of the vital forces that dwell in Christ, we find it in the impression He made upon the men about Him. They were only fishermen, sitters at the seat of custom—bits of common clay, but they caught the spirit and took their impulse from Christ. His spirit so wrought in them that when He himself had left the earth, they became heralds not of a creed but of a passion.

Jesus opened the gates into a new universe. He taught us that the cross on which the sinless one died for the sinful is the supreme interpretation of God. He turned His face to the world in the midst of His own suffering and cried, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In His own person He brought a spiritual power and dynamic which broke up the old order of the pagan world and founded a system based upon an uncalculating and overwhelming love. He mastered men and events and broke into the leaden night with a blazing passion that was vol-

canic and irresistible. He broke up the order of His time to the breaking of His own heart. Well says Forsythe, "He was an austere man, a severe critic, a born fighter, of choleric wrath and fiery scorn, so that the people thought he was Elijah or the Baptist. Yet He was gentle to the last degree, especially to those ignorant and out of the way. Clear, calm, determined and sure of His mark, He was the next hour roused to such impulsive passion as if He were beside himself. But if He let himself go, He always knew where He was going. He poured out His soul unto God and unto death and He was the friend of publicans and sinners."

At the cleansing of the temple, He was so hot with imperious haste and mighty indignation that from that moment His enemies said, "You to the death," and they never let up in their persecution until they had Him nailed to the Cross. When His disciples saw His fiery indignation, we can imagine one as saying to the other, "Of what does this remind you?" and the other answers, "It reminds me of the Psalm in which it is written, 'The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.' " The visual image of zeal as Coleridge calls it, is a boiling pot. The root of the word is in the Greek *zeo*—to boil. Could there be a more vivid word to describe the boiling over with heat of the passions and emotions of the Son of God? Is it any wonder that it is written, "As many as I love, I

rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent." The one thing that Jesus could not endure was ease in Zion. The words to the church at Laodicea fairly blistering us, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

What a phrase that is—"to be eaten up with zeal." All fear of what the people or the leaders might do unto Him is forgotten. All sense of reserve and lamb-like meekness devoured. For the first time we appreciate "the wrath of the Lamb" as we see what He did in His Father's house that day. With far-reaching emphasis Alexander White says, "His holy zeal sustained Him and impelled Him all through His life, and the same ruling passion was His greatest strength in His death." His disciples must have recalled it and said to one another even while they forsook him and fled, "The zeal of His Father's house hath eaten Him up." They must have said it to themselves as they stood afar off and saw His crucifixion consummated.

Now the Saviour said Himself that it was enough for the disciple to be as his Lord. We bear His name; we represent His life to the world; we are to personify His teachings. How can we do that if we ourselves are not ablaze with holy passion? It was a flame which was the

symbol of Pentecost. Those disciples, discouraged and ashamed, were to have every barrier melted away and to go forward with a blazing passion that nothing could stop, until, as tradition has it, Paul's zeal consumed his body and his head rolled from the block. The rest of the disciples had cruel mockings and scourgings and imprisonments, their devotion so consuming them that they had no heart left for anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It was not a new thing for an absorbing passion to consume the lives of men. Love of power had just eaten up Julius Cæsar; love of praise had eaten up Tullius Cicero; love of liberty had eaten up Marcus Cato; love of pleasure had consumed Mark Antony. Was it any wonder that Paul, consumed by a greater passion than any of these, should say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Put this over against any purely intellectual conception of Christianity, and how frigid all that appears. The one thing necessary for every soul is to catch his Master's passion. Small wonder that Whitefield's cenotaph has carved upon it a flaming heart, and that the grave of Adam Clark bears similar testimony to a passion which consumed a life in a blaze of flaming devotion.

The proposition which I wish to lay down as the prerequisite to all evangelistic endeavor is that no man can be the herald of his Lord's pas-

sion if he does not himself share it. No man can win for God unless he is willing to pay the price in blood and tears. I make my plea to the church and the ministry for a consuming zeal. "No heart will long be pure that is not passionate, no virtue safe that is not enthusiastic." Our splendid cathedrals are built according to the most approved plans of the architects, and our altars are set up in noble and stately art. I am ready to grant the virtue of apostolic succession to all who minister there, but the question which I ask with deep heart yearning is this one, Have the fires been kindled and are they blazing on the altar, or have they gone out and are men now shivering in doubt where once God's prophets led out His hosts in power? In many places the priests of Jehovah seem to be as impotent as the priests of Baal to call down the heavenly fires. They have poured the waters of doubt over the stones and the sacrifice and they stand forsaken where once there were cleft skies, and falling fires to consume sacrifice and altar and later lick up the last drop of the waters of doubt and demonstrate to all Israel that God and Baal do not keep company on the same Olympus. From crying "Thus saith the Lord," and saying with holy assurance "I know whom I have believed," they are shaking limp hands over a credo of faith and immortality which has lost its power, and are looking behind them with the hope that they may

be buttressed by scientific investigation rather than the glad assurance of a triumphant faith.

We preach many sermons about the rejection of Christ, and we blame the men of His century, but what is the condition with us? We bow before the conventional and are smug and comfortable. If we had Jesus with us today, would we not find Him a great inconvenience, and maybe send Him either to jail or to an asylum as a disturber of the peace? Such zeal as His was in the highest degree uncomfortable for the dilettanti of His time. Even those who represented the Church would not abide it, but the record of history is that in all its great ages humanity has bridged the gulf which threatened it by "walking over the body of some fanatic who made himself a highway for his race." Jesus was a man of intense feeling and He never held in His emotions. When He saw men robbing their poor neighbors at the seat of the money-changers, He overthrew their tables, and lashed with His tongue those who had prostituted their opportunities and imposed upon their neighbors. When He saw the city given over to indifference and men walking holy places with stolid heart, He wept.

We have a great deal to say in our conventions and stately assemblies about emotionalism. We are greatly fearful lest religion shall seem to be a matter of life instead of a matter of creed. As a matter of fact, there is no fear whatever in

our time that there will be too much emotion connected with religion. Even the great evangelistic meetings are not open to that charge. I have been in closest touch with them for the last generation, and I am bound to say that I have nowhere seen anything which approached emotionalism. I have seen tens of thousands of men coming up to shake hands with evangelists, but not one in a hundred had even a tear in his eye. The impelling motive in most cases was purely social or ethical, with no sense of such conviction of sin as would blanch the cheek and make men's knees knock together. He is a poor student of psychology who does not know that the emotions must lie at the base of all great thinking or doing. Herbert Spencer said, "In the genesis of a system of thought the emotional nature is a large factor, perhaps as large a factor as the intellectual." It is a sad tribute which Charles Darwin brings. After an experience which had dwarfed his emotional life, he says "At the age of thirty poetry of many kinds gave me great pleasure and music was a great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry and I find Shakespeare so intolerably dull that it nauseates me. I have lost my taste for pictures and music. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect and more probably to the moral character by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature."

In his essays on "Criticism" Matthew Arnold says, "The permanent virtue of religion is that it has lighted up morality, that it has applied the emotion and inspiration needful for carrying the sage along the way perfectly, for carrying the ordinary man along it at all." Dr. Sheridan quotes John Stuart Blackie: "The early church worked by a fervid moral contagion, not by the suasion of cool argument. The Christian method of conversion, not by logical arguments but by moral contagion and the effusion of the Holy Ghost has with the masses of mankind always proved itself the most effective."

Dr. John Watson will not be accused of lack of clearness in thought; he says: "Every great movement which has stirred the depth of life and changed the face of history has sprung from some profound sentiment and powerful emotion." Dr. Alexander Maclaren, one of the clearest thinkers of his time, is moved to say, "There is a kind of religious teachers who are always preaching down enthusiasm and preaching up what they call 'sober standards of feeling' in matters of religion. By which, in nine cases out of ten, they mean precisely such a tepid condition as is described in much less polite language when the Voice from Heaven says, 'Because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.' I should have thought that the last piece of furniture which any Christian Church in the

nineteenth century needed was a refrigerator. A poker and a pair of bellows would be much more needful to them. Not to be all aflame is madness, if we believe our own creed."

"He shall baptize you with fire," and if it does anything it will kindle emotion. The great glory of the Gospel is to cleanse men's hearts by raising their temperature, making them pure because they are made warm, and that separates them from their evils.

William James ought to understand the psychology of religious life, and he says, in his "Varieties of Religious Experience": "I believe that feeling is the deeper source of religion, and that philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products like the translations of a text into another tongue." Dr. Jowett voices a great truth when he says: "If the church would be pure, the church must be passionate. Elevation of character depends upon warmth of affection. A fiery heart by the energy of its own heat creates a self-preserving atmosphere against the devil."

Among those liberal denominations which have been quite inclined to accept the dictum of President Eliot that the religion of the future will be intellectual and not emotional, that religious emotion is the result of defective culture and will cease when education and evolution have done their work, there is a mighty swing of the pendulum. They are holding evangelistic services

night after night. When the present writer was asked to give an address on evangelization before one of the important gatherings of one of the liberal churches, he asked with a smile, "Do you think you can stand my message?" The reply was, "We must have more vital religion." Of all the addresses which I have given, none were received with greater apparent fervor than the one delivered under such circumstances.

To feel the thrill of a great love and to be profoundly interested in men and things is not bad form, it is Christ-like. To warm up to a publican and to warm over a Pharisee is the kind of business which thrills the heart of God. He said there was one thing all men needed, and that was conviction. We have our foibles, our weaknesses, our indifferences, our by-plays and our avocations. The crying need of the world is a few first-class convictions. And what is a conviction? Is it not something that makes a convict of you; that is, something that fastens a man to one thing so that he is not at liberty to roam everywhere to no purpose? Then he can say, "This one thing I believe; this one thing I do." A Christian without conviction is powerless and is a contradiction of terms. A Christian that prefers plans of salvation to salvation itself, that raises definitions of the nature of Jesus above surrender to the joy-giving Saviour is a travesty on the Son of God. The seal on Adam Clark's

grave, to which I have referred, is a candle burned down to the socket. Underneath are the words "In living for others, I am burned away." Livingstone burned out his life that he might overthrow the slave trade of Africa. Aristotle said, "No great genius was ever without some admixture of madness." It was this joy in service, this uncalculating devotion which has proven itself mighty to change the hearts of men, and the age in which it has lived. It was not Erasmus, the polished, the learned, the vacillating, the mightiest intellect of his time, but it was rough, yearning, burning Martin Luther who made Germany. In his last sermon Joseph Parker said, "As long as the church of God is one of many institutions, she will have her little day. She will die and that will be all. But just as soon as she gets the spirit of Jesus until the world thinks she has gone stark mad, then we shall be on the high road to capture this planet for Jesus."

One fears that in some quarters the pulpit has lost its nerve and forgotten the evidence of history, that whenever Christianity has been most convincing she has been most victorious, and whenever she has been most apologetic, she has been most futile; and also that it is the schools within Christianity which are constructive and aggressive, and not the schools that are critical and eclectic which have chiefly affected their generation. If, as some think, our fathers were too

sure about everything, it would be an immense gain if some of their children were absolutely certain of anything. It would be a great disaster if the intellect of the Church should be so occupied in recasting the form of the Scriptures as to have no strength left for declaring the Gospel which they contain. Is it not time that the strength of the ministry were withdrawn from purely intellectual exercises, from purely intellectual investigations and destructive criticism and given to evangelism? Have we not had enough of recanting? Is it not time for some confessing? We are justified in disbelieving the things which have not been proven, only if we believe and practice upon the things which have been proven. There are some who seem to be ready to refuse to believe anything which our fathers believed, and are quite ready to accept anything if it is not in the Bible. A book which denies is supposed to be honest and thoughtful, and a book which affirms, it is taken for granted, must be narrow and prejudiced. Those who doubt everything which the Church has held for nineteen centuries give themselves amusing airs of superiority, and the people who hold the heart of the Christian creed are likely to be regarded with intellectual pity. There is one thing worse than the arrogance of wisdom and that is the arrogance of learning, for the learned man ought to be broad enough to know better. As a matter of fact, there is no more ability in doubt-

ing than in believing. If there is a bigotry of orthodoxy there is also a bigotry of heterodoxy, and the last appears to be the more insolent. Why should so many prefer the evidence of non-religious persons on faith to those who are its chief experimental witnesses? It does not follow that because Darwin knew about earth worms that he was an authority on the soul; or because Mr. Huxley was a most lucid teacher of natural science that he had any right to say the last word on miracles. Even in religion one must be scientific and depend not upon amateurs but upon experts. "In the high affairs of faith, are we not more likely to arrive at the truth by listening to the saints than by listening to persons whose admirable studies have been among the lower animals?" John Watson says there are only two provinces of absolutely sure knowledge—one is pure mathematics and the other is the experience of the soul. "If Paul had a right to say 'I,' and we allow him to be a conscious being, then he had a right to say 'I know.' And if it be granted that he could know anything, he had perfect right to finish his sentence, and say, 'I know whom I have believed,' and we can do no better than to accept the certainty of such experience."

Faith is the center of the financial world. From the man who sends his goods for money he has not seen to the man who accepts the last dictum of science, we move in this world by faith. Un-

belief blocks the wheels of all progress. Only faith can right a ruined world. Only faith can make men lay down their arms and pick up the ax and the shovel, and faith finds its highest exemplification in the matters of the soul.

CHAPTER II
THE TABLE-TALK OF JESUS

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THE TABLE-TALK OF JESUS

The table-talk of great men is always fascinating. It is supposed to be the measure of a man when he is among his friends and can speak unhindered by fear of misunderstanding or failure to appreciate. It is years since I read the table-talk of Martin Luther; from it I gained a new idea of the great throbbing heart and the human interest of that great leader of the Protestant Reformation. To another generation the table-talk of Hazlitt was full of literary surprises and nuggets of wisdom, the depository of much that would otherwise have been lost to the world, and the loss of which would have made the world poorer. The master reporter of table-talk is Boswell. It is Boswell who gave Samuel Johnson to the world. One hardly knows at times which to admire the most—the stern old philosopher or the loving scribe, who sets apples of gold in pictures of silver. We like to know what men thought it worth while to talk about to their friends,—what were the values that they held to be supreme. When there was no reason to trim one's sails to

social, political or ecclesiastical trade winds, how did they sail their crafts?

Perhaps there is no remark of Daniel Webster's more frequently quoted than the one he is said to have made at a table where distinguished friends had gathered. One asked, "What is the most important question you were ever called upon to consider?" His questioner may have thought of the great legal and political questions which had been submitted to the great lawyer. He may have had in mind some of the grave questions concerning our Republic, but Mr. Webster, running his eye down the table, asked, "Are there any outsiders here?" "No, sir, all are your friends." With deepest solemnity of manner the great man said, "The most important question that ever engaged my mind is that of my personal responsibility to Almighty God."

I am sure the world is agreed that of all the table-talk which has been caught by devout disciples from the lips of statesmen and philosophers and passed on to a listening and adoring multitude, none is so full of meaning or read with such rapt attention as that which fell from His lips who spoke as never man spake. We have some of His words reported to us by His friends. How we long for the thousands that must have dropped by the wayside, or at the morning or evening meal. What a sweet hyperbole is that of John, "And there are also many other things

which Jesus did, which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books which would be written." If the world today could find some new word which He thus spoke to His disciples, its presses would run night and day until every last citizen could have another message from His lips. Parables like those which now gladden the world must have fallen without stint from His blessed lips. A few of them have been preserved for us and make us rich indeed.

Jesus was a famous diner-out. His enemies charged upon him, that while John came as an ascetic, Jesus was "a glutton and a wine bibber." You do not think of it in that fashion, but close examination will impress one with the humor of Jesus. Who can read His parables, if he reads with discrimination, without a smile; and then how intense He was. "If your eye offend you, pluck it out"; "if your hand offend you, cut it off." Go drown yourself rather than say a word that shall offend one of these little ones. And what paradoxes were His! He that would save his life shall lose it. He that would lose his life shall save it. It was the heart of the man that was thrilling in all His table-talk. It was the love of His soul, the zeal that was burning and fairly consuming Him that manifests itself here. His whole life could be epitomized in the single sentence "He had a passion for saving the lost."

And at these wonderful dinner parties, this message thrills out.

The table-talks of Jesus are not an interlude to His passion, they are a part of it. They are introduced here to show that in the most intimate social relations in life one thought is ever uppermost. He never temporized; He never kept the yearning of His heart out of sight. Whether He talked with Pharisee, or Sadducee, or publican, or sinner, in public or in the privacy of their own home, before the interview was over He had told them in some form the one glorious fact that was epitomized in Him—"I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly." The table-talks of Jesus are such talks as a father might give with his arm around the neck of a thoughtless or a sinning child. This was what He meant when He said, "Whoso hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Here are two dinner parties that we may first consider. After Matthew, the publican, was called from his disreputable profession, he did a rather brave thing. He gave a farewell dinner to his old friends in office to celebrate his going away, and he invited Jesus. I suppose he wanted the old comrades to see what sort of a man He was to whom he had given his allegiance, and it may be that he had hopes the Master's presence and love would do for them what it had done for him. One almost wonders at the courage of

Matthew to invite the friends of the old life to meet the One who had led him to the new. Matthew must have been satisfied that his old friends would feel at home with Him and he knew that whatever Jesus said would be said with a kindly heart, with no sense of aloofness, and least of all with any sense of the attitude of the Pharisee. What do you suppose the scribes and Pharisees, the members of the church, the high-toned leaders of Capernaum said when they heard of it? Do you wonder that they attacked His disciples and said, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? What does He have in common with them?" You would not expect in our time a lot of grafters and men of doubtful reputation to be especially eager to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Greek Primate. In whatever talks Jesus had with Matthew before—and he must have had many of them—we do not know what approaches He made, or what Matthew said, but at last He came one day to the tax gatherers' office and said unto him, "Follow me." Matthew must have leaped with delight to think that all he had done that was selfish and evil was so thoroughly forgotten or forgiven that Jesus wanted him to be with Him, and when he heard that call he left all and followed Him. I suppose Matthew never forgot his old business and the stigma which went with it. I confess there is a tug at my heart as I see where this humble dis-

ciple, when he wrote the list of the apostles, put in his own name and did not forget to round it out by saying "And Matthew, the *publican*." Much that He said there we have no record of, but with such a company and with such a host, we know almost as well as if it were written down, what He would have said. We know His stainless purity would humble them, but we know also His infinite yearning would make itself manifest, so that they would see He loved them so that He was willing to die for them. That was why publicans and sinners drew near to hear Him, that was why the common people heard Him gladly. He opened His heart to them. He told them of His love. You remember how Jesus answered the Pharisees who murmured because He had gone to Levi's house, "They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous but the sinners to repentance."

Then there was another dinner. This time He is invited to a Pharisee's house. It was after a busy day that Jesus had an evening engagement to dine with Simon, the Pharisee. That dinner has been heard of throughout the world, not because of the palace in which it was served and not because of the courses which crowded the table, but simply because of one broken-hearted woman who was a sinner and who intruded herself upon the feast. It looks as if she had met Him before and that

she had already some cause for gratitude. Can you not picture her—you who have seen her like in the great city? Do you not understand why she came there? Can you not see the pictures of the days of innocence, which floated before her eyes, maybe of a home of prayer; of an anxious father and mother from whom she had turned; of the promises made to them which she had broken; of the promises made to her which others had broken? And so the poor girl with broken heart and broken life steals in to the feast. Whether she had told Him her story before or not, we do not know. Whether she had heard that wonderful story of the lost boy, we cannot tell, but at any rate, in some way, hope stirs in her heart and a changed life stretches before her, pointed out by the tender love of the Man who sits there at the feast. Her attitude is not one of importunity, it is rather one of passionate gratitude for something already granted her. Maybe she is just leaving Capernaum to go back to her mother and begin a new life, and this is her last chance of showing her love. You picture the scene—the guests reclining on couches around the board, their feet resting on cushions, and then this poor woman throwing herself with passionate sobbing at the feet of the Master. The veil is off her face and the fastenings from her hair. If anything was necessary, these are the things which tell of her life. An alabaster box of oint-

ment she pours on His feet and with her glorious hair she wipes them and presses her lips on them with adoring devotion.

Of course everybody is disturbed. Simon is courteous and condescending to his guest. The neighbors are saying, "This prophet must have known about the woman. Why does He let her touch him?" Simon's thoughts are plainly stamped upon his face. And now listen,—“Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee.” With some restraint and rather sadly, Simon says, “Rabbi, say on.” And then comes the story of the big debtor and the small one and how the gracious creditor forgave them both, and the query which of the two loved the giver most. We hear Simon saying, “That does not interest me, but I presume the one to whom he forgave most.” Now Simon, it is your turn. It may be the Master's hand crept down his seamless robe and rested upon the head of the penitent, “I would not have mentioned it, Simon, but when I came to your house, you did not even offer me water for my feet; but this woman has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss of greeting, but she, from the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil you did not anoint, but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto you, her sins which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth

little." Is there any story that shows more tenderly the yearning of the Master's heart? There are many who identify this woman with Mary Magdalen, and that fact is "imbedded in centuries of Christian art and literature," and the name will always persist as a synonym for a fallen but penitent woman. If it is true, is it not a beautiful and thrilling thing to see how the devotion of that once abandoned woman never failed by so much as a jot until the end? She was one of the few who saw Him die on Calvary, and regardless of the contumely and insult which might be heaped upon her, she followed His body to the grave and was the first at the sepulchre on the glorious Easter morning. With agonizing heart, she cries to him whom she took to be the gardener; "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where and I will take Him away," and with the same voice that at first spoke peace to her repentant soul, her Lord spoke the one word "Mary!" Nobody else ever said it that way; into no other voice could such pure and tender solicitude be pressed. In an instant she knew the glad truth that her Lord was risen, and she fell at His feet crying, "My Master, my Master!"

How anybody could think of that dinner in the house of Simon, the Pharisee, and what the Master said, and all that flowed out of it and still remain indifferent to those who long for the saving grace which comes from unstinted love must

surely pass human knowledge. It is a heart of stone that can remain stolid, when he thinks of what happened and how the joy of it never faded away, but was crowned with glory on the resurrection morning. Small wonder that when Renan was looking around for someone whom he could make responsible for a resurrection which he wished to deny, he should have cried, "Divine power of love, sacred moments in which the passion of an hallucinated woman gives to the world a resurrected God!" Is it strange that Renan's book and his theories were buried with him, while the whole Christian world stands in adoring wonder at Mary's side?

It was at another Pharisee's table that He smote the heart of the cold and proud by telling of those who give tithes of what amounts to nothing—the mint and anise and cummin—and neglect the mightier matters of the law. When His host complains that he had not performed the usual ablution, He showed the folly of those who were more anxious to have clean hands than clean hearts, who looked at the outside of the cup but paid no attention to the filth that was within.

It was at the table of Simon, the leper, that another Mary showed a love without bound or limit, born in homely fellowship, perfected at her brother's grave. Perhaps the cap of the alabaster box refused to open, and in her haste she broke

the box and poured the ointment, fit for a king, upon the head she loved.

It was when the utilitarian spirit flared out, as it has done in all the days since; it was when those who take no account of love and sacrifice and holy ideals but who weigh everything on the scales of self-interest and measure everything by worldly standards—it was when such people were taking all merit out of a noble act and making it only an impetuous movement of an ill-balanced mind, that Jesus lifted this little woman upon a pedestal so high that all the world will see her till the crack of doom! Can anybody have any question as to what Jesus thinks of uncalculating service? Can anybody ever think of offering Jesus anything but their best after this? There it stands; let it never be blotted out. Let it be written on the fleshly tablet of every devoted heart that is willing to pay the price that his Lord demands—"Verily I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." There is at least one pedestal in the temple of fame which God has set up that will never be vacant. With reverence let us muse upon the reason!

Those who are troubled by many things, who are examples of what Emerson said, "Things are in the saddle and they ride mankind," let them stand behind the Master at Martha's simple feast.

“Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.” Three different types. The anxious housekeeper, with a sense of responsibility, who brings things to pass, a good manager, a capable woman who has to be responsible for things. Here is one type of those who hide their own feelings and never like to see others express theirs. Sentiment does not appeal to her and she is quite inclined to take to task any whom she calls mystical, emotional, sentimental. Martha has her good points, may she never disappear from the family. The wheels of daily life would drive heavily without her. When her dear old hands are folded, more tears will be shed for her possibly than she has shed for others, but if Martha can only understand the gentle reproof of the Saviour, she will know that the sister whom she calls a dreamer, who indulges in holy contemplation, and nourishes a devout soul, is one of the pure in heart who see God and are thereby the more lovable. “She hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken from her.” Let Martha and Mary twine their arms around each other. They will each be the stronger for the other’s presence. Jesus says, “Don’t fret, Martha, put the first things first, and all things shall work together for good.”

As for Lazarus, for whom the feast is given, from him we hear nothing. Paterson Smith recalls the suggestion that he was the young ruler who once made the great refusal, whom Jesus

beholding loved and kissed him on the brow. Perhaps that is not true, but at any rate, Jesus loved him with the yearning of a great heart, and Martha and Mary knew that as much as He loved them, Lazarus was preeminent, for they named him to Jesus, "Him whom thou lovest." From that dinner table may the love which gives each heart its place around the family board be passed to every home!

Of all the Master's words at table, surely none were so precious as those He spoke at the last supper, when He was host himself. He and His disciples knew it was the last talk He would have with them before He faced the tragedy which they could neither appreciate nor understand. We are minded of a scene three hundred years before when the sacred ship had come back from Delos and the eleven had stricken off his chains that Socrates might drink the fatal hemlock, and his jailer was saying, "He was the gentlest and best that ever came here." But beautiful as was that scene against the clear blue of the Grecian sky and beautiful as was that cheery message of him who was going out upon a great adventure, this is an hour before which all other human farewells shine with a lessening ray.

Since there were no servants to do it, Jesus had washed His disciples' feet and said to them, "He that would be chief among you, let him be the

servant of all." Judas has gone out "and it was night."

What does he say as a pattern for all those hours when the disciples talk together? The one word which is in the air when words can be but few, the one word which rolls in infinite reiteration from His lips is the word which was the center of His life and of His kingdom—"Love." Here is a new command—"That ye love one another as I have loved you." Here is the measure of your discipleship—"Ye are my disciples if ye love one another. The measure of your love for me will be the measure of your union with me. If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." And then He falls to talking about the same thing that Socrates talked about, only with an assurance and depth of meaning which Socrates never knew, and with good reason.

We are inclined to say with Philip of Spain, who, when asked if he had noticed the eclipse, said, "No, I am so busy with things down here that I have no time to look up." There are many who are restive at any word concerning the future life. Not so Jesus. He revelled in it. His last table-talk was pitched to the tune of it—"Let not your heart be troubled. I am going away from you. In my Father's house are many mansions. I am going to prepare a home for you and we are all of us going to be there. Here you will be

lonely and you will be troubled, but I shall be thinking of you and waiting for you."

If we could live on here without headache or heartache; if we could feel no want and know no poverty; if no bitter words were spoken, and no unkindly acts done; if nobody grew old, and love was never disappointed; if no red flag ever waved, and the sexton never plied his spade, what a world this would be! But Jesus said over the table at the last supper, "I am going to get a place like that ready for you."

Sam Johnson said he didn't like Wesley, for just as he got his legs under the table for a long talk, Wesley would run off to see some old woman who was in want. Here the days and nights of friendship are short. Here we cry, "All hail," and in the next instant, "Good-by. It is time to go." Jesus said that His was a land of perfect fellowship, and there was never to be any night with its darkness and separation. We say, "I shall always be thinking of you," but Jesus said more; He said, "I shall always be with you. You will not see me, but I will be there, closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet. The Holy Spirit, one with me and the Father, will walk and talk with you. He will lead you into the paths of truth. He will be your comforter in trouble, your wisdom in ignorance, and will bring you safely through. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

After that they sang a song—His song—but the message of it all was “death does not make any difference with love.” We can say to those to whom our hearts are bound:

“Thee I loved always,
I love still but thee,
And thee will I love
Through eternity.”

Death is only crossing a seam in the carpet, passing through an open door. Here and there and always, love never faileth. These are the messages which fell from His lips when He who spake as never man spake, talked with His friends and with the world out of His heart. Do you not feel the passion of them and do they not awake an answering passion in your own soul?

CHAPTER III

HERALDS OF A PASSION

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We cannot be heralds of our Lord's passion unless we enter into the fellowship of His suffering. He has left behind Him in the path He trod a message written in His blood and fastened with a nail to His cross—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." We long for His triumph and are fain to have some humble part in it, but the condition on which we gain it is found in the words, "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." If we may attain unto that any price will be cheap. The apostle was so convinced of that that he cries, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to us-ward." How can any of us dare to represent Christ to men if we do not know something of the thrill of His passion, if we do not yearn after the souls of men so that we can cry concerning our own flock, as John Knox cried for Scotland, "Give me—or I die!" This and no other is the passion which has transformed the world. Paul had caught it from his Master when

he exclaimed, "I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

It is a wonder that we can go through the sublime task which is laid upon us as heralds of a passion with a sense that it is an ordinary and common task. "I marvel," said the old Puritan, "how I can preach stolidly and coldly, how I can let men alone in their sins, and that I do not go to them and beseech them for the Lord's sake—however they take it and whatever pains or trouble it should cause me. When I come out of my pulpit, I am not accused of want of ornaments or elegance, nor of letting fall an unhandsome word, but my conscience asketh me 'How could you speak of life and death with such a heart? How couldst thou preach of heaven and hell in such a careless and sleepy manner? Truly this peal of the conscience doth ring in my ears, 'O Lord, do that on our own souls that thou wouldst use us to do on the souls of others.' " Are we not to get a verdict? Are we not sent out, in modern phrase, to actually sell goods? What boots it us that when we come down from the pulpit steps gracious ladies and cultured men thank us for the sermon, but do not surrender their souls to the will of their Lord? Is preaching a proclamation of a sublime and insistent truth, or is it only a lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument?

Morley says of Gladstone, who gained in his great Midlothian campaign, when over seventy, one of the greatest oratorical triumphs of history, that "he bore his hearers through long changes of strenuous periods as if he were now a hunter and now an eager bird of prey, now a charioteer of fiery steeds kept well in hand, and now and again we seemed to hear the pity or dark wrath of a prophet with the mighty rushing of wind and the fire running along the ground." Would that apply to much of our preaching today? As Dr. Jackson asks, "Are we not growing too quiet, too tame, too subdued? Are we not sacrificing to mere literary primness and prettiness and to a mistaken self-restraint? Our preaching," he says, "is too dry-eyed; there is no red blood visible under the skin. The commonplace is not vitalized; the thin wire of words is charged with no current that quickens and thrills." Men are often apparently eager for some theoretical truth but oblivious of the real purpose for which the truth is presented.

Dr. Bonar, after listening to a minister who was preaching with great gusto, said to him, "You love to preach, don't you?" "Yes, indeed, I do." "But," said Bonar, "do you love the men to whom you preach?" We do not have to choose between a fervid ignorance and a passionless culture. Thank God, we may have both a knowledge and a zeal, a well trained mind and a

warm heart. The man who knows the most ought to feel the most and do the most. The material which he gets together ought not to be a mass of dead fuel, he ought to touch it with the prophetic glow that shall set it ablaze. Only the divine fire wrought out in his own experience and conviction can do that. A recent writer to ministers has said, "The cold-blooded pedantry which affects to look down on all religious zeal as religious rant is being suffered to inflict the gravest injury upon the whole life and work of the church, and not least upon the life and work of the preacher." After all, nothing is so touching as an honest enthusiasm, and other things being equal, it is the man who is himself greatly moved and is not ashamed to let it be seen, who will greatly move others. Therefore, if a preacher has received from God a rich, strong, emotional nature, let him give no heed to the silly clatter of those who tell him he has no right to work on men's feelings—as if religion could do anything for a man whose feelings are not worked on! Let him give his zeal full play and he will find it mighty to the opening of many doors against which his most profound logic will beat itself in vain. In all true preaching spiritual passion is an essential element.

After all, it matters little how excellent the fuel if the fire be out. All that a man has of intellectual strength to the last ounce, he can put into

the work of preaching, but intellect alone can never make a preacher, and the man with no more heart than can be made out of brains is in the wrong place in the pulpit. Dr. Chalmers once compared the sermons of the Moderates to a fine winter's day: "They were short, clear and cold. Brevity is good, and clearness is better, but the coldness is fatal. Moonlight preaching ripens no harvest."

Dr. Jackson reminds us that whoever will go over the great names in the history of the Christian pulpit will discover that the passion to win men is the ultimate fountain of all preaching that is of the prophetic order. Of Rutherford a contemporary said, "Many a time I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ." John Knox was supported in his old age by attendants to his place in the pulpit, but when he arose to speak, the divine passion blazed in his soul, until, one of his friends said, "So mighty was he in his yearning that I thought he would break the pulpit into bits." Of Joseph Alleine it was said, "Infinite and insatiable greed for the conversion of souls, he preached with far-reaching voice, flashing eye and a soul on fire with love."

Is not St. Paul the best of all examples for the preacher? Hear him calling himself a servant of Jesus Christ, "separated unto the Gospel of God." He could say, "This one thing I do."

The divine imperative was upon his soul. "I must see Rome," he cried, because he was eager there to preach the gospel; and shouts with holy fervor, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation." The record shows that Paul was *constrained* by the word. His message burned like a fire in his bones. His passion to win men was a divine constraint which gave him no rest. By the space of three years, he told the Ephesian elders, "I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears." When his friends urged him not to go to Jerusalem, he cried, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Does anyone doubt that a passion like that had been kindled by the altar fire of Christ's own life?

What words are these from the hot heart of an English teacher of preachers! "Shall we repeat an old sermon? Yes, if you can recover the heat in which it was first made, but if your soul is no longer kindled by it, if the fire is gone out of it, and it is now but a poor dead cinder, then let it be put straightway in the place of cinders. People do not care whether your sermon is old or new; the only question is, 'Is it alive?' Alas for the minister who forces the simple folks to say, 'What he says is faultless enough, but it leaves me strangely cold.' So will it be if the truth which once was a glowing conviction at

which men warmed their hands becomes but a heap of ashes from which the last glint of fire has died out. That is the tragedy of more pulpits than one cares to think of."

The greatest thing in the world is love. That never faileth. It is the one thing which He asks of us. We cannot simulate it, if we wear a mask it will slip sometime. If love for man thrills our every act the world will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

CHAPTER IV
HOLY BOLDNESS

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HOLY BOLDNESS

The trouble with most Christian workers—ministers and laymen—is that they are afraid, and now as of old fear bringeth a snare. We are afraid of what people will say, for the moment a man does anything different from the ordinary, that moment he is the target for criticism. Some will call him too zealous, too personal and too insistent. It is only perfect love and perfect confidence and perfect abandon to the will of God that casteth out fear and that brings the personal victory. The New Testament has a great deal to say about boldness. We often quote the passage “They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.” But why did they? The record says, “When they saw the boldness of Peter and John.” So it seems that boldness was associated in the thought of the people with the life of Jesus. Again the apostle says that he declared the truth “with all boldness,” and the effect of that truth was a thrilling one on himself as well as on those who heard. Conviction breeds conviction. Hear the apostle say that “In nothing we shall be ashamed, but that with all bold-

ness as always so now Christ shall be magnified in my body whether by life or by death." You cannot hold a man like that—no pent-up Utica contracts his powers.

So everywhere through the teachings of the apostles, we are challenged to a boldness that is not arrogance, or simply self-assertion, or dogmatism, but an authority in boldness that has its birth in a sense of the mighty consequences that are at issue—a sense of the importance and imminence of a decision that outreaches time and thought. No doubt there were friends who stood by and said to John the Baptist, "Be careful what you say to Herod." But John thundered the truth into the very teeth of the royal sinner though it cost him his own head. "Mind what you say to Felix," Paul's anxious companions might have said, but Paul reasoned of righteousness and of judgment to come until the knees of the proud ruler knocked together. "We boldly proclaim the word," says the apostle again and again. It was the same spirit in which he said concerning himself and all of us that we were to come *boldly* to the throne of Christ and find help in every time of need.

Thousands of ministers are cribbed, cabined and confined because they do not dare to make the great adventure. Their faith fails them—they will not put it to the test. If they could only remember, "if thou hast faith like a grain of

mustard seed thou shalt say to this mountain, remove hence to yonder place and it shall remove." So many men who will not leave the safe harbor and put with God to sea! They are conventional and smug and comfortable. They do not know the joy of a great emprise. In this matter I am speaking out of my own experience. I know the temptations which face every minister through the weakness of the flesh. Some of us are naturally timid and shrink from the great contests where there must be a decision—a victory or a defeat. We would rather avoid it if we can, but if we do, we shall only know the shallows of life.

For the comfort of some of my brethren, I do not mind saying that again and again in my early ministry, I was put to the test which almost overwhelmed me. More than once I have walked around a city block before I could get up courage to go to the door and talk to a man about his soul's interest. I shall never forget the struggle of my own soul when I was asked to stand on the steps of the City Hall in New York and to address an audience of many thousands of men in the open. As chairman of the Committee on Outdoor Service for the Evangelistic Committee of the city, it was suggested that it would greatly help our cause and secure for our work helpful publicity if we could arrange for a service on the steps of the City Hall. When I asked permission, I was passed on by the city officials from one department to

another, but at last permission was granted, and we were told that we should have all the police protection that was necessary. I was quite aware that in my audience were many who were more inclined to scoff than to pray. I knew there were anarchists and socialists by the hundred in front of me, who cared for none of these things. It was not an easy matter to screw my courage to the sticking point and to say with shut teeth, as Garrison said long before, "I will not equivocate and I will be heard," and say without fear in the face of all classes and conditions of men "There is none other name given under heaven among men whereby ye must be saved but the name of Jesus," or to say with Peter on the day of Pentecost, "This same Jesus ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified."

It was not an easy thing for me, with a temperament that shrinks from notoriety, to stand on the seat of an automobile in Wall Street, under the windows of J. P. Morgan's office, and preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ to a surging crowd; to stand on the steps of the Custom House, the historic spot where the great political leaders, presidents and senators of the United States had stood, and to speak to thousands of men, who looked up into my face, concerning the one thing to which I had been called in the Christian ministry.

But out of every one of these experiences, which

were so trying to me that I could hardly gather courage to speak, there came such grace into my own heart that in a few minutes I forgot all about the crowd and only remembered my message and my Master. Scores came to me as I spoke at these places and told me how they had decided to go back to their old manner of life and to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Some of them were back-sliders, some had been superintendents and local preachers and class leaders, but they had come into the city and had hidden themselves away. They had said, "I have worked hard for many years, now I will rest." In resting it soon happened that they lost their zeal, and soon their love for the Master had become cold and indifferent. I had the pleasure of knowing that in many cases they came back to their old love and united themselves for vital service with the Church of the Living God. And many who heard the Gospel for the first time—aliens by wilful choice and wicked life from the kingdom of God—came back to their Father's house and to His yearning love.

It was when I stood on the steps of the City Hall, bringing home to the members of the church, with all the force of which I was capable, the fact that they were chosen of God for the world's redemption and that they needed to throw themselves with uncalculating devotion into the work, that I repeated several times the two words which

stand at the head of this chapter, and urged that those who were followers of Jesus, who counted not His own life dear unto Himself, should themselves be able to proclaim with boldness His truths and to stop short of no sacrifice for Him. I delivered my soul with great earnestness of the message which it seemed to me God had laid upon my heart. It was some weeks after that when one of the most successful preachers in America laid his hand on my shoulder and said, "I owe you a debt I shall never be able to pay, and all on account of two words which you used, but which I believe were sent by the Holy Spirit. When I went home after hearing your message, those two words kept ringing in my ears, 'Holy boldness, holy boldness,' and I said to myself, 'You are a coward. You do not dare to venture. You will not do what you know you ought to do. You are afraid of that fine congregation that gathers at your morning service. You want to observe all the proprieties and have the most dignified and proper service. You would not dare to preach a message straight to their hearts and to urge them to give themselves to Jesus Christ on the spot. You would not dare to send your deacons among that congregation and ask them to urge men and women to be reconciled to God.' I thought about it and I prayed about it, and the more I thought and the more I prayed, the more the conviction laid hold upon me that I must make the great

adventure. In order to preserve my own soul alive, I must cast myself into the breach. I remembered how He said, 'If any man will save his life, he shall lose it, and if he will lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, he shall find it.' On the next Sabbath morning I called my officials into the study and told them that I was greatly moved. I felt that something ought to be done and done at once; I feared that perhaps they would not like it and that the congregation might feel like resenting it, but I had in my heart the same feeling which Luther had when he said, 'Here I stand, God help me, I can do no other.' I told them all that was on my heart, and we had a time of great heart searching and agony before God. I asked them to spend the week in thought and in prayer, and on the next Sabbath morning as we gathered the atmosphere seemed to be surcharged with spiritual conviction. 'I want you,' I said, 'to help me take the message this morning and bring it to the thought and conscience of the people for immediate action.' "

So, my friend said, when he had given his message as hot with yearning as he knew how to give it, he called the officials to the front, and, in the presence of the congregation, charged them to carry the message of the Master to their friends among the people. "It was such an hour as we had never witnessed in the church. Strong men bowed their heads upon the pews before them

and many of my leaders were in tears. When I gave the invitation for men and women to stand for Christ and proclaim their choice of Him as their life leader, one and another and another responded until more than forty men and women came to the front, and clasping my hand, made a solemn promise to be true to God. I count that," said the preacher, "the greatest hour in my ministry hitherto, and, if I am ever tempted to be unfaithful, I hope I shall hear those words 'holy boldness' ringing in my ears, and that I may never prove recreant to the call of my Lord."

CHAPTER V

CULTURE



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CULTURE

A LOAD OR A LIFT

May my tongue falter and my pen forget its cunning before I say or write one word that hinders any man in his search for the deepest and broadest culture of which his nature is capable. True culture should increase our capacity, enlarge our ability and quicken our perceptions. When properly applied, it is the handmaid of religion as well as the husbandman of the mind. But is it possible that such a beneficent thing may be throttled in its purpose, so that it becomes a source of spiritual death instead of life? Here the appeal must be not to theory but to fact. Does anyone doubt that German Kultur came to be a blight upon the individual and the world? Germany was unequaled in her intellectual attainments of a certain kind, but the effect of it all on her scholars in the atrophy of spiritual vision and power will ever remain as an indictment of a godless culture that cannot be overlooked or explained away. Are we not right then in asking ourselves, "Is the culture which I have and to which I aspire strengthening my devotion to those

things which are pure and lovely and of good report? Are the most cultured men I know the most devoted to the highest interest of humanity and the most uncalculating and unselfish in the measure of their service?" Surely there can be no doubt that the standard of unselfish service is the one by which, in the last analysis, the greatness of men will be determined. There has been no dissent to the sublime affirmation of the Galilean Teacher—"I am among you as he that serveth," and "he that would be chief among you, let him be the servant of all." When you apply this standard, the record of culture is not always pleasant reading. Emerson made his literary bow to the world in his Harvard Phi Beta Kappa oration on the alienation of men of letters from the affairs of national life.

Like wealth and power of any sort, culture has its insidious temptations. First of all, it is compelled to be analytical and critical. It takes things to pieces. Its flowers lose their perfume in the study of calyx and sepal. There is no song in the nightingale's throat when the scalpel is searching for the source of its melody. It comes to the city of Man-Soul as most of our railroads come to town, through the purlieus of poverty and waste. Because it does not find beauty there, it is tempted to think the city has none. Because the city's soul is not in the street, it is quite inclined to believe that it has none. It loves to say it is

a searcher after truth for truth's sake, and is impatient with the pragmatic test.

What is truth for truth's sake? If you mean a truth that is sterile, that does not eventuate in life, then it is an impertinence in the sight of God and man to talk of that kind of truth. From the standpoint of a life spent in association with Greek and Roman philosophers, who freely encouraged suicide and lived lives whose abominations smelled to heaven, Pilate had good reason when he asked of the fettered Man before him "What is truth?" He found out, as any man of culture needs to find out—"For this cause was I born, that I might witness to the truth. *I am the truth.*" The only truth that counts in the realm of morals and religion is felt truth—truth that is vital and imperative. A formal creed is only the skin of truth stuffed. It is as useless as a last year's bird nest on the boughs of time. It is only when truth becomes incarnate that the world bows its knee to it and accepts it. That was what happened when a brown-frosted monk was walking up the holy staircase at Rome, and when the heart of an Oxford don was strangely warmed in Aldersgate Street.

Another temptation to which culture is especially susceptible is pride. It is fair to say that those who most reveal it are those whose culture is really limited, but, alas, there are so many of that kind! It is always true that

knowledge may be proud that it knows so much, but wisdom will be humble that it knows so little. There was a never-to-be-forgotten day when a freshman in another college strolled into the museum at Harvard. It was the opening of a fairyland to him. Eager-eyed he was gazing at specimen after specimen and wishing that he knew more about them, when a sweet-faced man, whose smile would have made summer in the Arctic, was standing at his side. Captivated by the man, the freshman heard him say, "These are my pets. May I tell you about them?" He lifted a trilobite and told the ignorant boy how that fossil was old when Pharaoh builded the pyramids and Attic poets sang. With infinite patience he answered questions which must have seemed foolish. When the wonderful man was interrupted and called away, the freshman asked a guide, "Who is that man?" "Don't you know—that is Agassiz!"

It is always true that a little learning is a dangerous thing and most of us with all our culture have yet but little knowledge compared with what is before us, and yet we are proud. Edison has said, "No man knows one seven-billionth part of anything." There is an arrogance of ignorance which we greatly condemn, but there is an arrogance of culture which ought with greater justice to be condemned, because the cultured man ought to know better.

Culture is tempted to interest itself in the form of things. It needs to be reminded

“ 'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant.”

It is more life and fuller which is the need of the hour. John Stuart Mill was the greatest thinking machine in England in the last century. At twelve years of age he knew more Greek than most of the professors in Oxford, and at fourteen the greatest mathematicians took off their hats to him. At the morning walk with his father, at the mature age of thirteen, they discussed the problem of Gibbon's “Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire.” When I was a boy in college, few names were more quoted in cultured circles than his, but I have seldom heard his name mentioned in the last twenty years. His latest historian says of him, “There was no fire under his boiler.” His culture was aloof and academic. He had no thrill of human interest, no glow of conviction. Toward the world's needs, he was as heartless as a graven image. When asked how he would feel if the principles he advocated were universally accepted, he said, “I would not *feel*.” He was the consummate flower of the culture of his time, but it was the culture of the dilettanti.

Perhaps no two men of the same age better illustrate the difference between culture and service than Erasmus and Luther. Erasmus was the greatest scholar of his day. There were none to

challenge his supremacy. He thoroughly agreed with the principles of Martin Luther, but when Luther's friends asked him to come out in the open and stand with him he said, "Why should I lose my living or my head?" He realized all the abominations of the Church of Rome. He said that instead of saying their prayers the monks were eating gingerbread that they might take more kindly to their beer, but he left Luther to fight alone for God and men. If he had only stood with the little monk at the Diet of Worms he could have changed the thought of half the world and projected himself for the help of men through untold millenniums. Luther sighed over his deflection and might have chanted with Browning in his *Lost Leader*,

"Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick on his coat."

If you want to see culture as a load, read Froude's "Times of Erasmus and Luther." If you wish to see culture as a lift, there is Henry Drummond, the scholar; "Chinese" Gordon, the soldier,

"Who always and everywhere
Gave his help to the weak,
His sympathy to the suffering,
His substance to the poor,
And his heart to God."

There is Phillips Brooks, the preacher, and Borden P. Bowne, the greatest philosopher that America has produced and one of the most faith-

ful, eager-hearted Christians I have ever known.

In Conferences and Assemblies and Synods throughout the country, I have had ministers by the score ask, "Why is it that with deeper, more scholarly culture and training, I am less effective in moving men to God?" The answer is not far to seek—your culture has become a load instead of a lift. While you have been busy with the delights of scholarship the fire has gone out upon the altar. Thus so many of the prophets of God stand shivering around the altars where the fires have failed and are as impotent as were the priests of Baal to call down the fires of God from the ascending heavens.

Knowledge ought to be power. Culture, if it is to be a lift and not a load, must be transmuted into service for God and man. When the culture of the mind exceeds the culture of the soul, a man is educated beyond his capacity. He is doing too much business for his capital. It is a prostitution of talent when he who knows the most does the least. It might be well for the best of us with all our culture to lay our finger on our lips and listen to the greatest Teacher of all the ages, Son of Mary and Son of God, who says to His friends in words which the world will never allow to be discounted or to perish, "If any man will do my will, he shall *know* of the doctrine."

CHAPTER VI

THE PASSION OF THE PROPHETS

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THE PASSION OF THE PROPHETS

No one can look at Sargent's picture of the Prophets in the Boston Public Library without feeling a tug at his soul. What glorious men they were—laymen all of them—gatherers of sycamore fruit, cup bearers to the king, but whatever else they did, one great absorbing passion for the Israel of God was on their souls. They were not only forth-tellers of the truth, but they lived it out. There was Israel turning from God, giving herself up to idols, and they were sore distressed. See stern old Elijah, the greatest of them all, for whom to this day every child of Abraham sets a chair at his solemn feast, the man whom they say locked up by his prayers the cisterns of the heavens and carried the keys of them for three long years in his pocket! How shall he let Israel and its king go on to their destruction? A king is seeking him but he will not temporize his message, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Elijah answered, "Not I, but you and your father's house have wrought the overthrow of this people." And he told him that in Naboth's vineyard, where of all places on God's green earth the king

would least desire to meet the prophet of Jehovah. See him on Carmel calling back Israel to her old-time faith. He will not temporize or equivocate, stern old prophet of righteousness. He will not let things drift. It is a time of decision. "Choose ye this day whom you will serve; if God be God, serve Him, and if Baal, serve him." More of the Saviour's challenge—decide something, don't drift! And then that a race to Jezreel—a king in a chariot bested by a prophet on foot, and the prophet oversped by the rain drops of the mercy of God! Small wonder that when John the Baptist came, they said it was Elijah, and when Jesus came they said it was the spirit of Elijah and the thunderous voice of John the Baptist rolled into one.

And here is Isaiah, perhaps the most gifted of all the prophets, a man of great natural endowments, intensified and consecrated to the loftiest ends by his self-surrender to God. He had the intellectual grasp of a great statesman and the fervid imagination of a great poet. He was a seer who could see. How his yearning soul portrayed the love of God and His righteous indignation! What irony, what ridicule, what challenge to heights of spiritual experience! How utterly all his gifts were mastered as he sought to win Israel back to God. His were the words that Jesus loved to quote, and no prophetic words are oftener on the lips of preachers today than the

words of this marvelous prophet. He is the great evangelist, the proclaimer of the good things. "Ho, everyone that thirsteth come ye to the waters, buy wine and milk without money and without price." And those Messianic prophecies—"He was wounded for our transgressions; the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him, and by his stripes are we healed." May my soul stand in holy wonder before such a flaming heart and fiery tongue until I myself have caught the blaze of it!

Of Jeremiah it was an English preacher who said, "However many Isaiahs there may have been, I am glad there was only one Jeremiah." He seems to think that one weeping prophet and one set of jeremiads was enough, but would it not tend toward the multiplication of good shepherds who would give their lives for the sheep if there were many who could come to say "O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."

What shall I say more for the time would fail me to tell Daniel and Nahum and Amos, gatherer of sycamore fruit, and Jonah, and Habakkuk, whose prayer, Webster said, was the most sublime thing in literature, and all the long list of the prophets down to Malachi, who with a challenge which burns in our soul, cries, "Will a man rob God," and all the yearning of his soul condensed

into one glorious prophecy at which the heart of God's people will bound for joy until they see the prophet himself in the land of his fruition, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another and the Lord harkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name, and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

CHAPTER VII

THE PASSION OF GREAT EVANGELISTS

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THE PASSION OF THE GREAT EVANGELISTS

Where shall we begin the story of evangelism? Who were the great evangelists? We can only touch upon one here and there, for their number is legion. Prophets, apostles, the church fathers, the reformers themselves were all what they were because of the great evangel which trembled upon their lips. Perhaps we cannot do better than to mention first that wonderful evangelist, John Bunyan. How we love him! How we have marched with him to the city of the great King, the new Jerusalem! He has led us all the way into the green pastures by the delectable mountains, past the slough of despond, and all the wonderful path until we come in sight of the City of the Saved. All this he crowded into a narrow cell in Bedford Jail. It was there he heard sweet angels singing lauds for him, and because of what happened there, he would be willing to go back and stay "until the moss grows over my eyebrows rather than in anywise to deny my Lord." Look at his wonderful characters and the names they bear—Mr. Great Heart, Christian, Faithful, and Mr. Valiant-for-Truth. How many souls has John

Bunyan led out of the City of Destruction? He could not have led others if he had not gone that way himself. It is out of his own great experience that he is speaking, and no man can lead others unless he himself is led of God. John Bunyan had known the sinful life, but with what fulness and depth he came to know his Saviour is found in the sweet story of Grace Abounding. May we all stand at last with Mr. Valiant-for-Truth and see the heavens filled with the chariots of God and hear the trumpets sound for us on the farther shore.

Next we turn for a moment to the man who traveled more miles to bring the gospel to the lost, as Birrell says, "than any man who ever bestrode a beast"; a man whose devotion was marvelous from the days when he was a student in Lincoln College in Oxford, but who says that all that availed him nothing until that day which Christendom will never allow to pass out of its sight, when his heart was "strangely warmed" and he went out to do for England more than was done by the armies and navies of England in the whole length of his life. What courage and what toil! Ease and he had parted company, and as for money, he lived upon a pittance and gave away more than \$200,000. Abused and maligned in his time, he could say, "I leave my reputation where I leave my soul—in the hands of God." He said to his brother Charles, "When I devoted

to God my ease, my time, my labor, did I exempt my reputation." So he traveled 225,000 miles and preached 2,400 sermons, and, amid misrepresentation and abuse, never knowing the delights of love at home, subject to incessant attacks of the mob, the pulpit and the press, he did not abate a jot of heart or hope until he had reached the age of eighty-eight and ceased at once to labor and to live. Canon Farrar says, "Overwhelming evidence exists to show that the church and people of England in his day were dull, vapid and soulless and the preaching was careless, the land steeped in immorality. To Wesley was granted the task for which he was set apart by enviable consecration—the task which even an archangel might have envied him, of awakening a mighty revival of religious life in those dead pulpits in that slumbering church and moribund society. His was the religious sincerity which not only formed the Wesley Community but, working through the heart of the very church which had despised him, he flashed fire into her whitening embers. It was he who discovered that lost secret of Christianity—the compulsion of human souls. He was the voice that cried over the valley of dry bones, 'Come from the four winds, oh spirit, and breathe upon the slain that they may live.' " In Westminster Abbey, that great temple of silence and reconciliation, one may read three of his great sayings: one full of holy knowledge, "I look

on all the world as my parish''; another full of triumphant confidence, ''God buries His workmen but His work goes on''; the third, his cry in age and feebleness extreme, the best of all is, ''God is with us.''

In the long list of great evangelists, no name stands out clearer in the light of an absorbing passion than that of Whitefield. To him two continents acknowledge their debt and keep green the traditions of his marvelous power. Most of the leaders and charmers of men have come to their service from under the low lintels of the poor, and Whitefield was no exception. Uniting with Wesley to form the Holy Club at Oxford, he was at first morbid in his spiritual earnestness. He wore patched clothing, ate coarse food, prayed under the trees far into the winter nights in such agony of soul that the sweat ran down his face. At last he laid hold on God by simple faith. He had traveled his own *via dolorosa* and through pain he came to peace; thereby he was enabled to help others who journey alone in the cypress path.

Ordained at twenty-two, he began to preach immediately with tremendous effect. Probably no man since the days of Paul excelled him in sacred eloquence. Said John Newton, ''If you ask me who is the second preacher in the world, I do not know; but if you ask me who is the first, there can be but one answer.''

Franklin went to hear him plead for his orphan

school in Georgia, but resolved he would give nothing. After listening a little, he decided to give his coppers, then his silver and then his gold, and emptied his pockets into it when the plate was passed. Hopkinson left his money at home purposely, but was moved to borrow of his neighbors. Garrick said he could repeat the word "Mesopotamia" so that it moved him to tears.

But after all has been said about his eloquence, his power with men depended most upon the passion of his soul which absorbed every lesser ambition and used every God-given power to lead men to the personal choice of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. He was a kindred spirit with Jonathan Edwards in this regard and together they led the Great Awakening of our young Republic. No man was more untiring in devotion than he. At one time he writes, "Lord when thou seest me in danger of nestling down put a thorn in tender pity into my nest," and again, "I am determined to go on until I drop, to die fighting though it be on my stumps."

When nations forget their dependence upon Him and personal allegiance is lightly held and the individual conscience is benumbed, when form triumphs over spirit, and worship degenerates into heartless ceremonials, God sends his messengers of flame. So came the old prophets to Israel; so came Savonarola to Italy; Luther to Germany; Knox to Scotland; Wesley to England,

Edwards and Whitefield to America. In such manner God in all ages has called back His people from apostasy.

When Whitefield preached in Boston, the city was at white heat. Twenty thousand heard him in Philadelphia, and thirty thousand crowded Boston Common to listen to him. Mr. Cooper, pastor in Boston, said, "Under Whitefield's preaching more people came to me in one week in deep concern about their souls than in the whole twenty-four years of my ministry." Mr. Prince, another pastor, said in substance the same thing. Mr. Webb said about 1,000 in deep conviction came to him in three months. The pastors unite in saying the same spirit prevailed for more than a year and a half after Whitefield had gone.

Speaking of his passion, Dr. Parsons said of him, in a sermon preached on the day of his death: "We were convinced that he believed the message he brought to be of the last importance." On the marble cenotaph above his dust at Newburyport these words are carved: "As a soldier of the Cross, humble, devout, ardent, he put on the whole armor of God, preferring the honor of Christ to his own interest, repose, reputation or life." In thirty-four years he crossed the Atlantic thirteen times and preached 18,000 sermons. For his seal he had a lambent flame and under it the motto, "Let us seek heaven."

In his time, Whitefield, like Wesley, was ac-

cused of almost every crime. As Dr. Squintum, he was caricatured by Foot, the actor, from one end of Great Britain to the other, even after he was in his grave. He was called the clerical pick-pocket, and accused of appropriating his great collections to himself, but those accusations only live in history to fasten obloquy upon those who made them. In Cowper's words,

"He loved the world that hated him. The tear
That dropped upon his Bible was sincere.
Assailed by scandal and the tongue of strife
His only answer was a blameless life."

The record of his last hours at Newburyport is thrilling beyond words to tell. He is preaching his last sermon. His subject is "Faith and Works." With far carrying tones he cries, "Works, Works, a man get to heaven by Works! I would as soon think of climbing to the moon on a rope of sand!" But his voice begins to fail, "I go," he said, "to my everlasting rest. My sun has risen, shone, and is setting. Nay, it is about to rise and shine forever. I have not lived in vain, and though I could live to preach Christ a thousand years, I die to be with Him, which to me is far better." He was to preach that night, but he felt he could not. He took his candle to go up to bed, but midway on the outside stairs he paused with his candle in his hand. Answering the importunity of the people, he spoke with the passion of his blessed Lord until the candle burned down to

its socket and went out. Would that a picture of that scene at Newburyport might hang in every preacher's study in America! He went up to his room and to an agonizing night, then

“Just as the sun in all his state
Illumined the eastern skies
He passed through glory's morning gate
And walked in Paradise.”

Whitefield was no organizer like Wesley. He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord,” and America owes him a debt which it does not fully appreciate and which it can never repay.

Time would fail me to tell of Fox and Tennant and Brainerd; of Finney, losing his strength that he might gain his power; of Moody saying, “There shall be one man completely consecrated to show the world what God can do with a soul entirely given up to His service; and scores of men, some of whom have finished their evangel in victory, and others who still move the people up to God, both in the pulpit and out of it. They are the heralds of a passion which stopped not at the Cross, and they shall share here and hereafter the glory and benediction of their Lord.”

CHAPTER VIII

THE TEACHER'S PASSION

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THE TEACHER'S PASSION

There is one miracle of grace by which a wandering soul comes back to God. There is another by which a soul itself touched with infinite love feels an absorbing passion to go after another who, like itself, had gone astray. There is no place where one who has felt this high commission can hope to win greater trophies than in the Sunday School. Birrell says of John Wesley that "he was out of breath pursuing souls." If only the same panting desire might be born in the heart of every Sunday School teacher!

Thompson pictures, in "The Hound of Heaven," God out after the soul; pursuing it up and down the universe. The hunted one flees, as men so constantly flee, from the highest and seeks refuge in every human thing that could be called at all good, but the point of the poem is that the good must never hide men from the best. So the soul is never allowed to rest in lower things; just as the soul would nestle in some new covert, she is turned from it by the imperious *best of all* that claims her for its own.

Now in the teacher's life there are many oppor-

tunities to advance the good, to develop intellectual taste, to encourage the scholar's thirst for learning, but none of these must stand in the way of the one thing for which the teacher is called to his high eminence. Nor literature, nor ideals of any sort can take the place of the one ideal—the perfect life in Christ Jesus. So the Sunday School of itself is not an end; teaching of itself is not an end. The result of the Sunday School is the production of life and character, and the end of teaching is that Christ may be formed in each scholar, the hope of glory.

In order to teach such lessons, it goes without saying that one must have experience in the thing he teaches, so that no one may turn upon him and say, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself or did another tell it thee of me?" Has he first hand information? Does he speak out of a rich and full experience, which has been wrought in him by holy ventures and has entered through the travail of his soul into the substance of his life? To a heart which has such an experience, what a challenge presents itself! Twenty-seven millions of young people in this country who are not in the Sunday School and almost as many millions more already within its reach!

Of old one crusade followed another. That the sepulchre of Jesus might be won from the Saracen, Peter the Hermit cried "God wills it," and hundreds of thousands of men marched on the

first crusade. Fifty years later a million and a quarter set out for Jerusalem, no one of whom saw the Holy Land. So one crusade followed another, and little enough resulted from them. Perhaps the saddest of all crusades was the Children's Crusade in 1212. An army of thirty thousand French children, unarmed, led by a boy named Stephen, set out for the Holy Land by way of Marseilles, and a similar army of German children marched over the Alps and came to the Mediterranean. They thought the sea would divide for them and they would pass over to the Holy Land in safety. Most of them perished on the march, or were lost at sea, or were sold into slavery.

Now the time has come for a crusade for the children. A challenge of unspeakable importance rests upon the heart of the church. Shall we be able to win these millions to the service of the Master? You may rear buildings, but the torch of the incendiary may consume them or the tempest may overthrow them, but when we put our touch upon the plastic soul of youth, it will remain there when the wax has changed to adamant. We must not bungle our work. We see men and women who were the subject of malpractice in their youth by careless or ignorant servant or physician. They will walk the path of life to the grave and every step they will go with pain. Life's functions instead of being a joy have become an

agony. Sad as is that picture, it is not for a moment to be compared with the work of one who bungles in the forming and transforming of the soul, who brings only human diagnosis and remedy in the place of the wisdom and power of God. Every teacher must realize that her students are looking not simply into her face but into her soul, that the thing she is is greater than the science she teaches. Garfield said if he could sit on one end of a log and have Mark Hopkins, President of Williams College, on the other, it would be all the college he required.

Here as nowhere else comes the gospel of the personal touch. I cannot bear to think that the soul of a child should be either mishandled or neglected. That thrilling story of human experience, "Twice Born Men," was called in England "Broken Earthenware." I do not want the fair vase of life broken. Thank God it sometimes happens that a broken vase may be mended by His grace so that it can hold the water of life, but let me protect and surround the vase so that it may not be shattered. It is a sad comment on the passion and the efficiency of our teaching force that one out of every five who come to the Sunday School is won to Christ in the School, one after they leave the School, and three are not won at all. It is time we taught our children that they are never too young to surrender their hearts to Jesus Christ. It is time our teachers felt that

their work has been in the most important part failure, unless by personal experience their members are coming to know Him whom to know aright is life eternal.

CHAPTER IX

THE PASSION OF THE CHURCH

CHAPTER IX

THE PASSION OF THE CHURCH

If one were asked what should be the passion of the church, there could be but one answer from progressive or conservative, and that would be "to serve the world." The Master's thrilling challenge would rise to our lips, "Ye are the light of the world, ye are the salt of the earth." The church ought not to be divided into two camps when it comes to the application of this great principle. At heart, we believe, the Church is really one, though it has often happened that, as in the old story, men looking at different sides of the same shield have called it silver or gold and have fallen to blows over their differences, when if each had taken the viewpoint of the other, their differences would have disappeared. May we venture an irenic word with the hope that it may serve in the end to make matters a little clearer and to unite for a common purpose forces which have seemed at times to be arrayed against each other?

A little careful thought will show that there is no antagonism between a personal and a social gospel. It is no doubt true that men have been

slow to realize that in addition to the burden which rests upon them from a sense of personal wrong-doing, they are also face to face with corporate iniquities and national selfishness and organized brute force, and that somebody is to blame for it. "We are all diseased and with our surfeiting and wanton waste have brought ourselves into a burning fever, and we must bleed for it." It is doubtless true that a conscience awakened to responsibility in social guilt will soon focus itself upon the more immediate circle of life about its possessor and bring to sight the hideous consequences of his own self-seeking, unfairness, indulgence and distrust. But it is also true that in most cases, the conscience does not become awakened to a sense of social guilt until it has become sensitive by a personal touch with Him who is the illumination of the soul. We do not come to love God through love to men, but we come to love men through love to God, and then the two are seen to be in essence one.

The great task which the church has is to bring men first to loyalty to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord; from that will flow the second loyalty to God's world, to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with Him, and with that will go the passion to spend and to be spent for those for whom Christ thought it not beneath Him to go himself to the cross, and who said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take

up his cross daily and follow me." There is a third loyalty to which our attention is called, namely, loyalty to the Church, to prayer, the study of the Bible, the worship of God's house, the fellowship which comes with a life of love. No one will accuse Henry Sloane Coffin of Union Theological Seminary with not having the modern viewpoint. He says: "Religion is not primarily something useful, but something fruitful. It is not a means of improving mankind alongside of other means, such as education, art, politics and morality; it is the parent of them all—their fountain of life. It is not one among several factors cultivating the soil of humanity, it is the source of its fertility. We are busy today directing the flow of Christian motives into many trenches to irrigate tracts of life which hitherto have been desert. And the church must stand then, through its ministry, not simply as a mere instructor imparting facts; the pulpit stands for the application of truth to create character. The minister preaches not to make men wise about books, or scientific discoveries, but to give them the power and grace of an endless life. The final test in preaching does not then lie in the fact imparted, but in the use of any fact to create an ennobled life." Dr. Crooker has well said, "When the teacher has set a fact in the mind, like a brick in the wall, he has practically finished his work, but the preacher must plant that fact in the soil of the soul to grow as the seed

of a new life.” It is true that the great need of the time is a social conscience, but what is a social conscience? Is it something concerned only with hours and wages and profits and conveniences? We certainly need a corporate conscience, so that we will not permit corporations to do what individuals have no right to do. But the social conscience that we need is one that shall concern itself primarily with those social duties and obligations out of which grow a noble life—a conscience about prayer and worship and Christian nurture, and not a social conscience that only concerns itself in a fair division of *things*. The stability of society is not dependent primarily on industrial conditions but on religious duties and spiritual ideals.

Dr. Roberts truly says, “There are such things as social or collective sins, but conscience does not deal with them on that plane. Sin is an intensely individual thing and the man who has had a controversy with his conscience knows that it is the ambassador within him, not of a certain social order, but of the moral order of the whole universe. It is not the mere reverberation in a man’s soul of a social order evolved by way of a natural selection; conscience is native, elemental, primitive. It is impossible to get behind the beginning of it. The thing which invests wrong with wrongness, and right with rightness and speaks in the

imperative mood is an indigenous thing, antecedent to the most primitive society."

Roger Babson affirms: "Religion is both the anchor and the rudder of prosperity. The real security of the nation is not its militia, but its religion. The real protectors of our homes are not the policemen but rather the preachers. Only as religion saves the world, can we save ourselves. A religious spirit makes better employers, better workers, and a better public spirit with which to deal. Furthermore, without such a religious spirit, all legislative, coöperative and other plans are of no avail. Religion is to the world what a spring is to a watch, and the sooner it is generally recognized the more people will be healthy, happy and prosperous." This man of business makes bold to say that the three things which the business world, the world of labor and of capital need are not the nostrums of socialism but spiritual power, faith and prayer. We hear, and properly, a very great deal about the material form in which Christianity should express itself, but are we not in danger of putting so much emphasis on works that we forget the source of conduct? If we are to have fruit, must we not realize that fruitage depends upon rootage? What will the hand do if the heart ceases to beat? If we have no wealth of soul to give, of what use will mechanics be?

One of the most illuminating of modern writers has said, "The most urgent demand is not for

service, but for spirituality. A soul fed from on high will certainly bow down and lift the lowly, but a generation that has lost faith in God and ceased to love Jesus will not serve humanity." The gospel of Jesus was nothing more nor less than the gospel of the inner life. His whole inaugural, the declaration of His purpose in the world could be condensed into a single sentence, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." The beatitudes are not blessings upon belief, they even go deeper than conduct and service; they go down to the roots of life. What are His parables—nothing more nor less than pictures of life; the leaven, the mustard seed, the wise virgin, the used talents, the good Samaritan. The abundance of the soul life is the thing which He came to bring, and so far as Jesus Himself was concerned, it was not His teachings—though they were the most sublime ever uttered—but the spirit of His life. When He examined Peter for his ordination, He did not ask him questions of creed or ethics, or doctrines of any sort; the only question which He asked, and that He repeated again and again, was "Lovest thou me?" It was the things that Jesus stood for that won the disciples at the first, or in any other age of the world's history. It was a life. It was He who said, "I am the life." The world has had many great teachers, but who goes to a life of self-denial along a path so hot as to blister their feet because

of these teachings? What was it that sent Father Damien to the leper, Paton to the South Sea Islands, Morrison to China, Livingstone to Africa, Grenfell to Labrador? Nothing but a personal love for a personal Saviour. May we always remember that we must give *ourselves* to the needy and to the oppressed. A Unitarian has written, "There is more danger that the source of personal piety will dry up than that children will starve or go naked."

There is deep wisdom in the words of Paterson Smith in his "People's Life of Christ": "Men are teaching laws of economics and principles of utilitarianism and ethical persuasions on the duty of doing good, but they are leaving out Christ; and they are not succeeding and they know it. Our political and industrial and social leaders feel their impotence, their lack of some great spiritual impulse to make their projects work. It is religion that is needed. It is not enough to tell us to do right. We want a pressing motive and a power."

There is only one challenge I wish to give—"Is thy heart as my heart? If it be, give me thy hand." There is room for almost infinite differences of opinion but there can never be any difference in the matter of a whole-hearted devotion to the Kingdom of God. The dying Scott said to Lockhart, his son-in-law, "Give yourself royally." Paul, speaking of Jesus Christ, says in a verse

that is matchless and stupendous, "Christ gave *himself*." Dying millionaires have given away their millions only when Death, the grim archer, had sent his arrow to their hearts and the rigors of death had loosed their grasp upon their treasure. But Jesus spent His *life* in giving himself. If, after having spent a life in ease and self-indulgence, in toying with our tasks and in shirking all we could, we should come up to the heavenly gate, over which is written, "These are they who came out of great tribulation," would we have the effrontery to pass in? Would we not ask for some lesser gate where we might hide our selfish and diminished head? But Heaven has no such gate. Its twelve gates are all alike, one motto is over them and one word is the password at each. When a rich man died a neighbor asked, "How much did he leave," and the village wag replied, "He left every cent." All you can hold in your cold dead hand is what you have given away! Well says Bishop Quayle, "The angel at the gate of life will make inquiry of every comer, 'Did you spend all your estate?'" When Ian MacLaren's "Doctor of the Old School" was dying, he faintly murmured, "I am tired to death!" He had used up every ounce of his strength and ability to help those to whom he ministered as a good physician.

There is Whitefield utilizing the last bit of his strength, stopping on the stairs on the way to his chamber to preach a last message to the crowd at

Newburyport, and then going upstairs to die. There is Wesley, riding more miles for the Master than any man who ever bestrode a beast, giving all he had of money and energy and time, and at the last leaving, as his biographer says, "a good library, a well-worn clergyman's gown, a much abused reputation and so—the Methodist Church." Paul used that gigantic word of his Lord, "He emptied Himself" to the last drop of His blood, and as for Paul himself, hear his own modest epitome of his service—"In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

Let us put that up against the spirit of our own devotion that it may be a challenge that shall nerve us in times when the fire burns low and the path of dalliance seems to be strewn with flowers.

Which shall we choose to be, an Ananias or a Paul,—an Ananias keeping back part of the price and dying of shame, or to empty ourselves for all

time and be filled of God's grace for all eternity? The apostle says, "What things were gain I counted lost for Christ." He takes no credit to himself, but he says, "Though I preached the gospel I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me. Yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." Having seen the vision, he must be true to it, and the one thing that glorified his life down to the time when he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," was the blessed fact that he "was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Do we not need to have something of his burden? We are not to misunderstand this. We shall know something of what he said, that though he was cast down, he was not forsaken; though he was poor, he was making many rich; though he was in tears, yet was he also in bounding joy. The very measure of his anxiety and longing became, on the other hand, the measure of his delight and victory when the desire of his heart was accomplished. So we would hear him saying, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." It is the same spirit which a father knows when he would rather have lost his life than that his own son should be killed, the same spirit which a mother feels when she will gladly wear herself out for the sake of her child, and will

not leave him even at the prison door or the scaffold's step. It is for this spirit that we yearn. When the world sees it, it will be no longer faithless but believing.

CHAPTER X

THE PASSION FOR SERVICE

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It goes without saying that whosoever will follow his Master must live a life of service. "I am among you as he that serveth," said the Master, and washing His disciples' feet, He set the pace for helpful, gracious ministries of every sort. What we need is a vast number of charter members for the Society of the Towel and the Basin. When an imperious mother asked of Jesus that one of her sons should be on His right hand and the other on His left in His Kingdom, she was speaking from the standpoint of the same selfishness and greed which we are facing today. We find men who want preëminence even in the ministry. There are plenty of us who would like to be major prophets, but who among us wants to be classed as a minor prophet? Who envies the man who is known as James, *the less*? It was very significant that when some time ago, reporters asked men in the streets of New York who was the greatest man in America, different men were named because a different valuation was placed upon the effect of their lives, but the basis on which each of them was named was not of position,

of office, of power, or of money, but only on the basis of service. Whatever difference there might be in the estimate of their achievements, there was no difference as to the cause of true greatness. It has always been so—the history of the world shows plainly that it has counted as its greatest men those who have most truly served. Every institution and every organization is measured by its service to mankind. When a nation proves itself unfitted for a task, it must pass away, and the same thing is true of the Church. What a fulfilment of this declaration we have seen in the last few years!

“Lord, where are kings and empires now
Of old that went and came?”

He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted those of low degree. We have seen many of the thrones of Europe emptied, discarded crowns by the dozen have fallen into the scrap heap. Why all this? Because they were useless, because God said, “I am tired of kings—I suffer them no more.” There is no more any divine right of kings. The motto of the Prince of Wales —“I serve”—is the only motto fit to be engraved over any throne.

After traveling through the country and being in touch with schools and colleges, as well as with the men of the street, after reading modern literature in the magazines and weekly papers, one is impressed with the fact that there is a sort

of materialistic epicureanism which is seeking to make its way in high places. There is a drying up of the great source of life, of the old sense of the outreach of humanity, of destiny outlasting the stars, and a high calling that is not ended with dollars and position. As a recent writer in one of our leading magazines has said, "Robbed of eternity, we mean to make time pay to the utmost. Hence this nervous, feverish activity. Our anxiety is an unconfessed manifestation of our immense sense of loss. We have but a few minutes in which to rob the house of life, let us seize all the articles in sight. Death, the householder, is even now waiting to take us into custody." As we look back at our old Puritan ancestors, we pity them for their narrow quarters, and all the hardships which they must have endured from lack of the conveniences which have become necessities to us. We live so much more comfortably and easily. In the dread winters which they passed, they must fell the trees and chop the wood and throw it into the great fireplace where most of the heat disappeared up the chimney. To light their homes, they had the tallow dips, which they prepared with much labor. Now if we want heat or light, we press a button. Conveniences of every kind await our nod. Handicapped as our fathers were, we often wonder was their life worth living. But as a matter of fact, they seem to have been rather happier than we are. The wilful

poverty of our spiritual lives must vastly impress us as we contrast that with the holy joy which is reflected in the story of their lives, which they have handed down to us.

At a recent church convention, the question arose on what issue to put special emphasis. Some thought it should be on social regeneration, some that it should be on legal enactments to outlaw sin, and others that it should be the application of religion to business, but it was finally decided that the crying need of the hour was first to get some religion that could be applied, to have some ideals that were good enough to regenerate the world when they were applied.

A recent article in one of our leading magazines makes bold to say that the destiny of man was once talked of as a spiritual mystery, connoting endless endeavor and opportunity. Terror and splendor attended the Word. Now the highest dream of high destiny is a porcelain bathtub, or some safe shelter behind a wire screen where we shall be impervious to the attack of germs. We have need of a profounder faith, a more poignant fear than this age knows.

One of our New York papers asked this question, "What is the matter with our mode of life?" and these were the answers given by the men whom the reporters stopped on Broadway: "We are drifting away from the faith of our forefathers. There are 65,000,000 heathen in Amer-

ica. That alone answers the question." Another said, "People are fighting for the material things of this world, instead of the spiritual." And the next man said, "We are drifting away from the teachings of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We need to be transformed instead of reformed. We are in the grip of a materialistic philosophy."

I think we are all agreed that the need of the hour is the restatement of the great verities which always have been and always will be supreme in the lives of men. We want the same upholding strength which the patriarchs knew and by virtue of which they went out to a land which they knew not, because they heard the call of God. We never needed more than we need now the consolations which uplift the soul in the midst of catastrophe and loss. They tell us that our churches are empty, but our asylums and our morgues are full. There is nothing that will so steady men in the midst of strain and calamity to play the game, to fight the good fight to the end, as to realize the besetting and forefending God. If we have lost our faith, our hope in immortality, how did we lose it? Must we not go back to the place where we had it last and see if we cannot find it? "If we have been robbed of incalculable hopes and aspirations, who robbed us? Do we not owe it to ourselves and to our children to bring the robbers to trial and to take from them that which

they have filched from us, making us and our children bankrupt indeed?"

One of our liberal papers some time ago had two editorials, the heading of which seemed like an affront to our whole Christian life. The first question asked was, "Can democracy tolerate the Church?" At first one was inclined to be indignant at the iconoclast who could even frame such a question, but it all resolves itself into a question of fact. If the church is the friend of the people, if the church is helpful in those things which are lovely and of good report, if the principles which it advocates make life safer, property more secure, and conserve the highest interest of society, there can be no question but that democracy must be the greatest ally which the church has, and the church the greatest organization to consummate a true democracy. The other question was, "Can Christianity tolerate the church?" The answer to that must lie in the question, "What is the church in its essential spirit and what is it seeking to become?" Christianity cannot tolerate the church unless the church is Christian, that is unless it has the principles of Christ in its life, unless it puts the first things first and enthrones spiritual values above all others and gives itself uncalculatingly and unstintingly to those things to which the Master gave Himself. It must cease to discriminate between the rich and the poor, or even between the ignorant and the learned, or

between those socially at the top or socially at the bottom. Jesus was no respecter of persons. He has one gospel for the Pharisee and the Publican—one gospel for Dives and for Lazarus.

Customs hoary with age have passed away because they were useless, because they did not benefit mankind. Once slavery flourished in every land. That was service under compulsion. It was right dominated by might, and God said, "It must go." The same is true of organization and methods of business and everything else that does not serve humanity. Their doom is written in the nature of things. Customs which curse and not bless cannot long survive, for they bear their doom in their own deeds.

We invite to our clubs and to our secret societies men who occupy a similar social plane, or who are congenial, or men of common tastes. If we want to make a club of the church, we can do the same thing there, but such a church will go down to ruin. A church must serve all classes and conditions of men, and he who has caught the spirit of his Master will go with a bounding love and a heart on fire to give service to those who need it most. It needs to be everywhere proclaimed that while the first duty of a man is to get his own soul right with God, he cannot grow in grace or even preserve his own sense of acceptance with God unless he throws himself with absolute aban-

don into the same work for which his Master lived and died.

“God does with us as we with torches do
Not light them for themselves;
For if our virtues go not forth of us
’Twere all the same as if we had them not.”

The church need have no fear of anarchy or socialism or sabotage or skepticism of any sort, if it will give itself to service.

But it is not enough, as we have said, to care for the lesser needs of our human life. “A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.” We are to lead men to a larger life. Here is our greatest service. We must seek for better conditions for men, but we must realize that first and last and all the time our object is to make better men.

I know scores of fathers and mothers who are in anguish not because their sons are not well paid, not because they do not live in good houses and under the best of sanitary conditions, but their hearts are breaking because their children are reaping the wages of unrighteousness, because in the midst of all their plenty they have turned from God to serve the world, the flesh and the devil. No one can read the daily papers without staggering under the fact that men of social prominence and many of our leaders, both among workers and capitalists, are men of ungodly lives who use the advantages of better conditions of

labor and better returns of capital to weigh their souls down to hell with the additional temptations which these successes have given them.

The church is to be the regenerator of the world—to throw itself into the breach, and since it stands supremely for spiritual things, it is to put these things at the very front. How can a pastor sleep nights or enjoy the comforts of life until he is conscious that he is doing the utmost within his power to put life under the ribs of this death? How can any member of the church go to his place of worship, receive the holy sacrament, which marks afresh the sacrifice of his Lord and recalls his own holy promise to be true to Him, without realizing that by daylight and by dark he must sound forth the call of his Master by his lips and by his life? When the passion of such a service shall possess the heart of the church, the world will throw off its indifference and the church will come to its own by the preëminence of its life and the power of its sacrifice.

CHAPTER XI

HOW TO NOURISH THE SACRED FIRE

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“Follow me,” said Jesus, “and I will make you fishers of men.” A man cannot become such of his own self. He is not equal to a task so supernatural. As we have been saying all along, nothing but the touch of the Master’s passion can create or conserve the soul’s spiritual life.

Boreham remarks on the transformation which took place in the life of Thomas Chalmers. He was the brilliant pastor of a little church in Kilmany, a marvelous preacher when he was only twenty-three. He was a good pastor and won their unstinted admiration and love. But they could not understand why when they came to the kirk on the Sabbath day he fulminated at that little company against the heinous wickedness of theft, of murder, and of adultery. After they had spent a hard week’s work in field and stable, why should they be berated by their minister as if they had spent the week in open shame? “This,” says Chalmers’ biographer, “continued from 1803 to 1811, but then something happened. Chalmers ceased to thunder against the grosser crimes and against the iniquities of Napoleon, but every day

he had something fresh to say about the love of God, about the cross of Christ, and about the way of salvation." "He would bend over the pulpit and press us to take the gift," says one of his hearers, "as if he had it that moment in his hand and would not be satisfied until every one of us had got possession of it. And then when the sermon was over and he rose to pronounce the benediction, he would break out afresh with some new entreaty, unwilling to let us go until he had made one more effort to persuade us to accept it."

He says that in 1811 he was converted. When he was called away to a great city parish this was what he said to his humble parishioners: "For the first eight years of my twelve with you, I thundered away against crimes of every sort, but the interesting fact is that during the whole of that period I never once heard of any reformation being wrought among you. It was not until the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon you that I ever heard of those subordinate reforms which I made the ultimate object of my earlier ministry. You have taught me that to preach Jesus Christ is the only effective way of preaching morality, and the lesson which I have learned in your humble cottages, I shall carry into a wider field."

Bunyan said the same thing long before the days of Chalmers. He says: "I went for the space of two years crying out against men's sins and

their fearful state because of them. After which, the Lord came in upon my own soul with peace and comfort through Christ. He gave me many sweet discoveries of blessed grace through Him. Wherefore now I altered in my preaching and did much labor to hold forth Christ in all His offices, relations and benefits unto the world. After this God led me into something of the mystery of the union with Christ. Wherefore that I discovered and showed it to them also." Ah, if we could only measure to the heights of that personal experience of which it is written "What we have seen and felt with confidence we tell."

Theories may be cold, but reality is full of passion. When one has an experience of his own, then he hastens to bring others into the same blessed knowledge, and when once others are brought in his own confidence is thereby multiplied. What a miracle of grace to be able to win a soul to God and what infinite comfort to the soul who wins another! Nothing can take the place of it. Mr. Valiant-for-Truth cries out, when the summons to go hence seized him, "My sword I give to him who shall succeed me in my pilgrimage; my courage and skill to him who can get them; my marks and scars I carry with me to be my witness that I have fought His battles who will now be my rewarder." When a man has victories hung up in the high halls of memory, how his faith increases! He won them himself

at the point of a Damascus blade, which is the word of God, and he is fain to say with David, "There is none like it; give it to me."

It is a sad thing in the life of the individual when the child spirit dies; when he ceases to wonder and adore. How supremely true it is in the life of him who proclaims the message that he will lose its power when the wonder and marvel of it fades out of his soul! A man need have no troubles over the miracles of the first century, when he sees them reproduced in his own life at the touch of the pierced Hand. If one can feel the compelling glow of those adoring words,

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride."

he will be able to say

"Jesus, I love thee, thou art to me
Dearer than ever mortal can be."

As well think of restraining the ardor of the bridegroom as to lay restraining hands upon his devotion. His love is as fire shut up in his bones. That will transform the pulpit and kindle a blaze which will draw men from every walk in life to see it burn.

We must make more personal the message which we bring to men. Dr. Jefferson will not be accused of failing to emphasize the social note or of being unduly moved by his emotions, but in his

Yale Lectures, he says, "Many a man is preaching to a dwindling congregation because his sermons have lost the personal note. He chills by his vague generalities, or enrages by his wholesale denunciation. This is not the age in which the preacher can afford to lose the personal touch. Many forces conspire to blur the edges of individuality and melt men into a common mass." Even organized philanthropy has a tendency to lose the individual. It is the lack of this personal touch which is multiplying our problems and deepening the blackness of human tragedy. Thousands of men and women all over the world have lost their grip upon the high things of life because no one but God feels for them. There is no one on earth who cares for their souls. Men are lost to the church as soon as they are submerged in the crowd. Dr. Jefferson adds, "In fact, the preacher is in danger of losing himself."

It is a matter of history that on one occasion when Julia Ward Howe invited Charles Sumner to meet a distinguished guest at her house, he replied, "I do not know that I wish to meet your friend. I have outlived my interest in individuals." Recording in her diary that night the Senator's surly remark, Mrs. Howe wrote after it, "God Almighty, by latest accounts, had not got so far as this."

The great secret of power is the personal touch. God Himself put on a soul and a body when He

came to us. They were arms of flesh and blood, like ours, which stretched wide upon the cross, and which when taken down and folded over the lifeless bosom invisibly folded a saved world in their embrace.

What a beautiful testimonial that was to the matchless personality of Henry Drummond, that when an artisan was dying, his wife knocked at Drummond's door and said, "My husband is deeing", sir. He's no' able to speak to you, and he's no' able to hear you, and I dinna ken as he can see you; but I would like him to hae a breath o' you aboot him afore he dees." No books can ever nourish a believing heart as will the goodness and patience and truth which is reflected in individual lives.

Here then is the conclusion of the whole matter. Jesus said, "I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly." By vital contact with Him who is the way, the truth, and the life, we must keep our souls alive. The inner light must not fail; our passion for the souls of men must never cease. But if, alas, our passion for the souls of men has in any sense failed, we must get it back. We must have our trysting place with God and meeting Him there, He who heareth in secret will reward us openly, and we shall have power with men. However great our natural abilities, they are only the channels through which the tides of holy passion and power

must run. Let us not mistake the channel for the power, and let us be careful that no act of ours shall sever our connection with the source of power. The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him. In fellowship with Him we shall catch His love—a love which stopped not at the cross. We cannot do better than to utter the prayer of the old hymn which for generations has aroused the church to a waiting pentecost.

“Oh, that it now from heaven might fall,
And all our sins consume,
Come, Holy Ghost, for thee I call,
Spirit of burning come.

“Refining fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul,
Scatter thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.”

The Master's call is upon us. It is hot with haste. Rise up; let us go!

THE END

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